

Battle Road Scenic Byway Committee
MEETING MINUTES
May 26, 2016
Lincoln Town Hall
16 Lincoln Road

The Meeting was called to order at 10:00 A.M. Committee Members Richard Canale, Chair; Bob Domnitz, Ted Fields, Aaron Henry, Lara Kritzer, Ian McKenzie, Nancy Nelson and Megan Zammuto were in attendance.

Ms. Zammuto introduced herself as the new Economic Development Coordinator for Lexington. She would be the new representative for Lexington and also worked with their Tourism Committee.

Approval of Minutes

No minutes were reviewed at this time.

Freedom's Way Partnership

Mr. Canale stated that he had spoken with Patrice Todisco, Executive Director for Freedom's Way, and had learned that they had Federal Funding that they needed to disperse to an organization with matching funds. They had spoken about using the funding to get the Battle Road's website up and running and to complete signage along the Byway. He explained that Freedom's Way was not concerned with how the funds were used so long as the funding was documented and recognition given to Freedom's Way on any documents produced. He explained that the matching funds could include any time that Members had spent on the Byway programs and that the funding could have been in FY15 or FY16 as the Committee would have two years to document the matching funds.

Mr. Canale believed that it was clear in the Memorandum of Understanding establishing the Byway Committee that the Committee had the ability to initiate and seek grant funding. He noted that the Town of Lexington had served as the Committee's fiscal agent in the past and was willing to continue in that role. Ms. Nelson moved to approve the Town of Lexington as the Committee's fiscal agent. Mr. Fields seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

Mr. Canale stated that Freedom's Way wanted to enter into a contract with the Byway Committee as soon as possible. He reviewed the conditions of the funding and noted that the match would be a combination of Member's time spent on the program and previous grant and allocated funding. It was noted that the Committee had not yet established a budget and that the amount of funding spent had been determined by what was available to date. Mr. Canale suggested that the Committee develop a budget in the future.

It was noted that most of the Member Towns produced an annual report and that the Scenic Byway Committee had not taken part. It was suggested that an annual report could be completed in the future that could be sent both to the Freedom's Way to meet the requirements of the grant funds, and to the individual communities for inclusion in their annual reports. Member discussed how hours would be documented. Mr. Canale explained that Ms. Rowe had documented her time on the signage project based on her hourly salary at 104 hours at \$224/hour. Mr. McKenzie noted that he had received invoices for the signs produced during that review which could be counted. Members discussed what professional rate should be used to calculate the amount

spent. Mr. McKenzie noted that the Public Works Department had to follow a similar process for FEMA funding and had established a standard rate that included benefits for those projects. Members discussed the proposed conditions and how best to report the time spent on the program. Mr. Domnitz suggested that the Committee develop a single spreadsheet that everyone could enter their information in to. Mr. Canale agreed and suggested that staff use an estimated round number if necessary. Mr. Henry asked if all of the information needed to be ready in one month to meet the spending requirements for the project. Mr. Canale noted that Freedom's Way did want the agreement in place as soon as possible.

Members discussed the process for moving forward with the grant funding. Arlington's representatives explained that they had wanted to wait for their Select Board to review the proposal before signing. Mr. Canale reviewed the MOU and thought that the Committee could go forward with the project pending future individual town approvals. It was noted that Lincoln had authorized the sign program funding already. Mr. Canale explained that the Freedom's Way funding needed to be used in the next few months.

Mr. Henry noted that Lexington had set aside additional funding for signs that should be spent before the end of the fiscal year. It was noted that Arlington had also set aside funding and that the two communities should discuss the need to spend the funds before the end of the fiscal year. Mr. Henry noted that there was \$10,000 set aside for signage and suggested that half of those funds be reallocated to the website program. It was agreed that the two communities would talk offline.

Mr. Canale stated that he had spoken with the branding project contractor, Selwyn Perkins, and learned that their company also did Web design and signage. Members discussed whether the same firm could be hired again or whether they would need to follow municipal funding procedures. Mr. McKenzie stated that if the project was under \$10,000 then it could be approved with other verbal quotes. Mr. Henry stated that Lexington preferred to receive written quotes and was willing to host the website. It was noted that the Essex Coastal website was well done and included plans, sites and connections, and that the trail was part of the National heritage area. Mr. Canale noted that Selwyn Perkins had proposed to complete the project in three phases – concept, content and programming – for \$5,000 per phase.

Mr. Domnitz asked if Freedom's Way had a website and Mr. Canale noted that they were working on one. Mr. Domnitz suggested that the Committee speak with whoever had worked on the Freedom's Way and Essex Heritage Area websites. Mr. Canale stated that he would ask about who had done these sites. Mr. Domnitz asked if there was any information available on the amount of traffic the sites were received and Mr. Canale answered that he was not sure. Members discussed whether to continue work on the website or signage at this time. It was noted that the Essex signs had just been installed and Members discussed its design and locations. It was noted that a sign had been installed at every turn in the trail and Mr. Canale stated that he did not think as many signs would be necessary for the Battle Road Byway.

Mr. Domnitz noted that it could take years to develop the content for the website and asked if the contractors would take that work on. Mr. Henry noted that the MAPC already had the management plan on their website. He suggested that the Committee begin by adding the plan to the website and work from that point. Mr. Canale believed that the contractor would take on that work and Members discussed the importance of local input in that process. Mr. McKenzie suggested that the website begin with maps, important sites, and links to other pages to give basic information on where the Byway was located and what could be found there. Mr. Fields agreed and suggested that commercial links should be added. It was noted that regular updating

was key to a successful website and Member discussed how this could be done. Mr. McKenzie also suggested adding a small sign to the area information boards on 95. He noted that those new signs could use a new, shorter website name to get the word out about the Byway.

Mr. Canale suggested that the Committee move forward with a vote at this time. Ms. Nelson moved that the Scenic Byway Committee agrees to accept the Freedom's Way funding in principle subject to receiving a formal agreement from the Member Town's Select Boards and pending approval from Town Meeting. Mr. Henry seconded the motion which passed with a vote of 4-0 with the Town of Concord abstaining.

Web site status and next steps

Members briefly discussed next steps for this project. Ms. Kritzer moved that the Committee empower the chair to work with the Town of Lexington to solicit quotes for web services. Ms. Nelson seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

Signage Program status and next steps

Mr. Domnitz noted that the Towns of Arlington and Lexington had set aside funding for new signage while Concord and Lincoln had not. He wondered if it was fair to have two of the committees carry the program cost for all four members. Mr. Henry noted that Lexington was interested in the Battle Road and felt that it was appropriate to set aside funding for its needs. Ms. Kritzer suggested that a developed budget for the program could make it easier for Members to request future funding for the program. Mr. Canale agreed to begin to work on that document.

Members discussed the possibility of seeking CPA funding. Ms. Kritzer suggested that the Committee begin by considering what category the funding would fall under and Members reviewed their community guidelines. Mr. Domnitz agreed to complete a spreadsheet to track all Members time and to send it out within the next two weeks.

Member Updates

Ms. Nelson reported that the National Trust for Historic Preservation had chosen Minuteman National Historical Park to take part in their Partners in Preservation program for competitive grant funding. If funded, the National Park would complete work at Parker's Revenge and to restore an historic barn. She noted that National Parks from around the country were taking part in the program but that only two projects had been chosen in New England. She encouraged Members to vote daily for the Minuteman project and passed out flyers on the program.

Mr. Domnitz explained that McLean hospital had purchase two properties near the intersection of Lexington Road and Route 2A. Their plan was to use them as therapeutic centers which are exempt under the Dover Act. The buildings would be temporary living facilities on Bypass Hill and the neighbors were very upset with the proposal and concerned that the development could eventually take over the area of Smith Hill. He explained that the half way homes were planned for 15-21 year olds.

Mr. Canale reported that MassDOT was bidding out the reconstruction of the Battle Road in East Lexington and planned to begin work by the end of September.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Lara Kritzer, Clerk
Battle Road Scenic Byway Committee